

Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-12

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SOFIA

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS:PFOR, EEWT, BU

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE CHANGE IN SIGNALS ON BULGARIAN COMMERCIAL
OFFICE

REF: SOFIA 1581

1. DEPARTMENT WAS SURPRISED TO LEARN THAT GOB IS RETHINKING
ITS SELECTION OF SAN FRANCISCO AS SITE OF THE APPROVED
COMMERCIAL OFFICE. AFTER AMBASSADOR POPOV INFORMED
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY ARMITAGE THAT SAN FRANCISCO WAS
GOB CHOICE, WHICH POPOV SPECIFICALLY CONFIRMED TO ARMITAGE
AS THE "OFFICIAL" RESPONSE, WE NOTIFIED OTHER USG AGENCIES
CONCERNED AND WROTE COURTESY LETTERS TO GOVERNOR BROWN AND
TO SAN FRANCISCO MAYOR MOSCONE. THEREFORE, TO AVOID
EMBARASSMENT TO BULGARIANS AND DEPARTMENT, WE PREFER THAT
GOB STATE ITS PRESENT POSITION BEFORE FURTHER ACTION BY US.

2. WE QUESTION NECESSITY FOR WRITTEN CONFIRMATION OF THE
U.S. DECISION TO ALLOW GOB TO OPEN AN OFFICE IN EITHER
SAN FRANCISCO OR CHICAGO, AS REQUESTED BY CHERNEV, SINCE
BULGARIANS HAVE BEEN OFFICIALLY INFORMED AT AMBASSADORIAL
LEVEL BOTH HERE AND IN SOFIA. WE PREFER TO GIVE WRITTEN
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FORMAL NOTIFICATION ONLY WHEN WE CAN NAME THE CITY. (THIS

IS CONSISTENT WITH ARMITAGE-POPOV CONVERSATION OF MAY 19 AS

DESCRIBED IN STATE 165377.)

IN PART, THIS IS BECAUSE WE INTEGRATE INTO A FORMAL DIPLOMATIC NOTE THE CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL (FOR EXAMPLE, NO DIPLOMATIC PRIVILEGES FOR STAFF). THIS ONE-STEP WRITTEN PROCESS AVOIDS FRUITLESS HAGGLING OVER LEGAL NECESSITY, FOR EXAMPLE, TO REQUIRE OFFICE -- REGISTRATION UNDER FOREIGN AGENTS REGISTRATION ACT. THESE CONDITIONS, AND THIS SCENARIO, ARE IDENTICAL TO THOSE WE USED IN 1973 FOR THE POLISH COMMERCIAL OFFICE IN SAN FRANCISCO, FOLLOWING AN EARLIER MISUNDERSTANDING WITH THE POLES OVER CONDITIONS ON A TRADE OFFICE IN CHICAGO.

3. DEPARTMENT HAS NO OBJECTIONS, HOWEVER, IF GOB DECIDES TO REVERSE ITS CURRENT OFFICIAL REQUEST IN FAVOR OF LOCATING THE OFFICE IN CHICAGO. YOU MAY ASSURE GOB THAT USG APPROVAL FOR ONE OFFICE IN EITHER CITY STANDS, AND THAT WE WILL MOVE AHEAD WHEN GOB HAS RETHOUGHT ITS CHOICE.

HABIB

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